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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 004443

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DEPARTMENT FOR OES/ENV - JULIE GOURLEY AND JOHN THOMPSON

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/19/2014

TAGS: [AORC](#) [EAGR](#) [ETRD](#) [PREL](#) [SENV](#) [IT](#)

SUBJECT: ITALIAN RESPONSE TO DEMARCHE ON NEGOTIATIONS
UNDER GLOBAL AGREEMENT TO PROTECT OZONE LAYER

REF: STATE 245175

Classified By: Scott F. Kilner, Minister Counselor
for Economic Affairs, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

(U) Per reftel, on November 18, the Ambassador conveyed non-paper to Altero Matteoli, Minister of the Environment and Territorial Protection. The Embassy's Minister Counselor for Agricultural Affairs delivered the non-paper to the office of Agriculture Minister Giovanni Alemanno, as well as to several Italian grower organizations interested in the methyl bromide issue. As of COB on November 19, there has been no official reaction from either ministry.

12. (C) We followed up with Federica Fricano (PROTECT), the senior adviser to Corrado Clini, General Director of the Ministry of Environment, who is currently in Washington. Fricano had been in contact with Clini, who reportedly touched on next week's extraordinary Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol in Prague with Department officials during his visit.

13. (C) In an unofficial and preliminary reaction to the demarche, Fricano told us that the GOI would continue to support the U.S. views on critical use exemptions (CUEs) in 2006. Specifically, Italy would continue to support the U.S. view that U.S. and other CUE requests should be approved based on the language contained in the Montreal Protocol that allows CUEs to be approved in cases where technically and economically feasible alternatives to methyl bromide are not available.

14. (C) However, Fricano noted that in contrast to the Italian support provided at previous Montreal Protocol meetings, Italy would probably not be able to support the U.S. position in Prague that the decision process of the Methyl Bromide Technical Options Committee (MBTOC) for recommending CUEs is flawed. This change has come about because the GOI is involved in difficult ongoing negotiations with the European Commission (EC), which administers the allocation of the Montreal Protocol CUEs within the EU. Following bilateral negotiations with Italy, the EC has proposed that Italy reduce its level of CUEs by 73 percent in 2005. According to Fricano, Italy has not accepted the proposal and is trying to negotiate a better deal before the next EC Management Committee meeting on December 9. She explained that the Ministry considers the MBTOC's expertise to be superior to the EC's and is arguing that the MBTOC should be seen as an "example to emulate" in the EC. Thus, supporting the U.S. view that the MBTOC recommendations are flawed might undermine the Italian arguments with the EC.

15. (SBU) We will continue to follow up with the Ministry of Environment and immediately report any further reaction.

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